## HOUSE AT MOULINS, FRANCE.

(15th CENTURY.)

### ANCIENT HOUSE AT MOULINS, FRANCE.

The annexed engraving represents a house erected in the fifteenth or at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in *Moulins*, a town belonging to the department of the *Bourbonnais*. It struck us as affording a good instance of the picturesque effects obtained by the old builders, not for effect's sake merely, but by making the elevation subservient to convenience and use. The tower contains the staircase: if it had been brought out square, it would have obstructed the light of the adjoining rooms, and it was therefore made pentagonal. Above, however, this objection does not exist; and in order to get a room at the top, the walls are made square, carried at the angles on pendentives; and to get stairs up to the room, a small turret is thrown out in the angle. Students should mark these matters, and give their thoughts free range when designing.

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Railway Rating.—We understand that a meeting of the representatives of some of our most influential railway companies was held on Thursday, in London, for the purpose of determining the best course to be adopted for remedying the abuses of the present system of rating railways to the relief of the poor.

### BITS FROM BRISTOL.

At the annual meeting of the "West of England Architectural Society," held recently in Bristol, no report was read, and the evening was chiefly occupied in a discussion on the effect of competition on architects, and their remuneration. The regulations of the Bristol Architectural Institution were read, in which it was suggested that competition was injurious.* Mr. Young said, he thought the time had hardly arrived when competition could be dispensed with, and regretted that the public interest in architecture was so little, while the sister arts of sculpture and painting obtained their full share of attention. He thought something ought to be devised to arouse the public, and infuse a correct taste and appreciation with respect to architecture. The Rev. E. J. Carter, secretary to the association, had always set his face against competition on several grounds. It was impossible that a committee of gentlemen, taken according to their subscription, could judge merely from drawings of the suitability of any particular building. At all events, when drawings of a building were made, they ought to be paid for. At present architects were very badly remunerated; 5*l.* per cent. was the amount of their commission, and as there were comparatively few large buildings in the country, he thought 10*l.* per cent. was not a farthing too much. Mr. Fripp was gratified at the very liberal view taken by Mr. Carter, but thought that he would not meet with much encouragement. Five pounds per cent. was perhaps ample where the building cost 60,000*l.* or 70,000*l.*; but it certainly ought to be increased as the cost of construction diminished.——Or say, where the building cost 6,000*l.* or 7,000*l.* Opponents of extra pay to architects, which we of course are not, might have quoted an anecdote of the celebrated Duchess of Marlborough, which has been recently set going by Mr. Jesse. This "strong-minded woman" was once squabbling with an architect (Vanbrugh?) whom she employed in the works at Blenheim. The architect insisted that a claim which he had preferred was not an exorbitant one. "Why," said the duchess, "Sir Christopher Wren was content to be dragged up to the top of St. Paul's three times a-week, in a basket, and at a great hazard, for 200*l.* a-year."——The report of the Society (above-mentioned) for 1849 has been published, together with an interesting illustrated "Paper on Bells," by the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe. Mr. Ellacombe's remarks on

* The Bristol Architectural Institution (the professional body) appear to conduct their business very quietly: their meetings go off without any report—in the local papers.

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